THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

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PRESS RELEASE

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EMMET GOWIN & RICHARD PARE: VIEWS OF THE MIDDLE EAST
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Contemporary photographers Emmet Gowin and Richard Pare record their individual responses to ancient sites in the Middle East in sensitive and compelling photographs that are reminiscent of the striking landscapes of 19th-century travel photographers. Six of Gowin's black and white photographs of the ancient ruined city of Petra in the Jordanian desert and nine of Pare's color photographs of Egyptian monuments and landscape are on view in Gallery D of The Cleveland Museum of Art through January 3, 1988.

American Emmet Gowin, who teaches photography at Princeton University, was invited to visit Jordan, and Petra, by one of his former students at Princeton, Queen Noor, the American wife of Jordan's King Hussein. The Queen had extolled the wonders of Petra, a mountain-protected city which had become wealthy from the caravan trade during antiquity but which had been abandoned following a series of devastating earthquakes and the Islamic invasions of the 7th century. Gowin visited Petra three times between 1982 and 1985, photographing its ruins and the rocky peaks which tower above the city. Dramatically composed and exquisitely printed, Gowin's toned photographs capture the mystery and beauty of Petra and the textures of its rose-veined stone. They include awe-inspiring views of Petra's deep gorges and sheer cliffs and evocative studies of the elaborately carved tombs and temples cut into the sandstone cliffs.

British-born Richard Pare, who now lives in New York, is known for his remarkable architectural photographs, taken around the world. The nine photographs in this show were taken between the winter of 1982 and the summer of 1984 when he was living in Cairo. They picture the great monuments, tombs, and temples of the pharaohs; modern Cairo with its splendid Islamic monuments, crumbling buildings, and urban sprawl; and the verdant oases which are small islands of life in the deserts. Sometimes Pare's photographs encompass a wide area, as in the panoramic view of the rooftops of Cairo; at other times they scrutinize subjects, such as the reliefs and inscriptions on temple walls, at close range. Sensitive to the contrasts between the ancient and the modern, Pare shows the interior of a mosque, resplendent with colorful tiles and stained glass but illuminated by fluorescent lighting fixtures, or a view of the pyramids with utility poles in the foreground.

Emmet Gowin was born in Danville, Virginia, in 1941. He studied photography under Harry Callahan at the Rhode Island School of Design, where he received his MFA in 1967. While most of his early photographs were deeply personal images of his wife and family, of late he has concentrated on landscape.

Richard Pare was born in Portsmouth, England, in 1948. He came to the United States to study photography at the Art Institute of Chicago, where he received his MFA in 1973. Since then he has worked as curator of photography of the Seagram Collection in New York and the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal. Photographs by Gowin and Pare have been widely exhibited and can be found in many major museum collections.

The photographs in this show were selected by Museum Curator of Contemporary Art Tom Hinson. Works by Gowin were lent by a private collector; those by Pare were lent by the Sander Gallery, New York.

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